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GOD

Acknowledged:

OR THE

TRUE INTEREST

OF THE

NATION,

And all that Fear GOD.

OPENED In A

SERMON

Preached *December* the 11th, 1695. Being the Day Appointed by the KING, for Publick PRAYER and HUMILIATION.

With Some Additions.

By BENJAMIN KEACH.

Psal. 65. 2. *O Thou that hearest Prayer, to Thee shall all Flesh come.*
Psal. 46. 10. *Be Still and Know that I am GOD.*

LONDON: Printed for *William Marshall* at the *Bible* in *Newgate-Street*, and *John Marshall* at the *Bible* in *Grace-Church-Street*. 1696.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

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The TRUE INTEREST of the NATION, and all that Fear GOD: Opened in a Sermon, &c.

Prov. III. VI.

In all thy ways Acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy Paths.

WISDOM in this Chapter, particularly in the first Verse, giveth to her Son, most needful and necessary Counsel; which ought to be observed by all who would be Truly Wise, viz. *My Son forget not my Law, but let thy heart keep all my Commandments.* By Wisdom, in several places of this Book of *Solomon*, is meant Jesus Christ; by *Law*, here may comprehend *Christ's Doctrine*, his *Word* and *Holy Precepts*. In the *second verse*, he lays down a precious motive, to stir up all understanding Persons thus to do; *For*

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length of days, and long Life, and Peace, shall they add unto thee: That is, Length of Good Days, a Joyful Life and Peace shall attend thee: In the *third verse*, He gives another Holy Precept, *Let not Mercy and Truth forsake thee; bind them about thy neck, write them upon thine heart.*

By *Mercy* and *Truth*, Is meant, That which ought to be in the heart of Man; and as these two are frequently joyned together, as they are in God, so they ought always to be in us; not Mercy without Truth, but both together: *Mercy*, denotes all that Benignity, Clemency, Compassion and Charity, and readiness to do good to others, according to the place or station where we are set, or are placed. *Truth*, may comprehend that inward Sincerity, Faithfulness and Uprightness of heart, which should be in us to God and Man, according to the Holy Precepts of Gods Word, and Rules of Justice and Righteousness; and these should be written or engraven upon the Fleshly Tables of our Hearts, and so they will be as a Chain of Gold about the Neck, or a precious Ointment to the Soul.

In the fourth Verse, We have a Blessed Motive and Encouragement to do this, *So shalt thou find Favour, and a good Understanding in the sight of God and Man:* In a serious and constant Exercise of Religion, we shall meet with Gods Acceptance, and attain unto a solid and spiritual Understanding, which will render us Honourable among all good Men.

In the fifth Verse, He subjoyns another Indispensible Duty, *Trust in the Lord with all thine Heart, and lean not to thine own Understanding:* He hereby shews, that we should wholly rely upon Gods Wisdom, Strength, Promises and Providence, for Help and Relief in all our Affairs and Dangers; and not to think we can by our Wisdom (let our Understanding be never so great, acute and clear) accomplish our Designs, or manage our Affairs.

To which he adds the words of my Text, *viz.*

In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

The Text opened.

In the Text are two parts:

1. We have a Duty enjoyned, *In all thy ways acknowledge Him.*
2. A Promise or Motive annexed, *And He shall direct thy paths.*

As to the Explanation of the Words, consider these things following:

1. The Subject, on whom the Precept or Duty is enjoyned

Thou my Son, or Sons; it may refer to one ſingle perſon, or to any one man that would be wiſe, and ſucceed well in his Affairs or Enterprizes, in whatſoever he takes in hand; or it may comprehend any wiſe and pious community of men, *Civil* or *Eccleſiaſtical*; for that which is the duty and true Intereſt of any one true Son of Wiſdom, as ſo conſidered, is the duty of all in every place or ſtation where they are ſet, whether in Church or State.

2. Obſerve the *Object*, Acknowledge *Him*; (That is, the Lord; as repeated in the Context, *Truſt in the Lord*: So here, Acknowledge *Him*; i. e. He that is your Creator, your God and only Counſellor.

3. *Conſider the matter of the Duty*, or what the Duty or Precept is, *In all thy ways acknowledge him*, That is, Know him, Own him, Acknowledge his Being, his Wiſdom, his Power, his Soveraignty, and expect Counſel and Succeſs from him.

4. The Univerſality of the Duty, *In all thy ways* Acknowledg God, Seek to him, Conſult with him, and that not only in one or two main caſes, that are of the greateſt moment, or in ſome difficult Exigencies; but in all thy ways, whatſoever thou attempt to do, for thy Self, Family, Church or State, thou muſt Acknowledge God; Cry to him, Conſult with him who ſits upon the Throne, who is the Mighty Counſellor, and Everlaſting Father, and only Potentate, and great Ruler of the World.

In all thy Deſigns and Undertakings, whether it be about the things of this Life, or about matters and things that concern the Life that is to come.

Secondly, You have the Motive, *And he ſhall* (or he will) *direct thy paths:* He will give thee Wiſdom and Counſel, and ſhew thee a right way, and Bleſs thee, and give thee good Succeſs, in all thoſe things thou ſetteſt thy hand to do, or in that work thou goeſt about, wherein his Name and Glory is concerned, and thy good.

From the words thus Opened, I ſhall only obſerve one Propoſition or point of Doctrine.

Doct. *That it is the Indeſpenſible Duty of every Man, or all Men who are Sons of Wiſdom, in every thing they enter upon or go about to do, to Acknowledge God, which they muſt do, if they would Proſper or meet with Succeſs.* The Doct. raiſed.

In ſpeaking to this Propoſition, I ſhall endeavour (God Aſſiſting) to do theſe things following.

1. Shew you what it is to Acknowledgd God, or *open the purport* of that word more largly.

2. Shew you in what ways more particularly *we should Acknowledg God.*

3. Shew you how or after what manner we should *Acknowledg the Lord.*

4. Give you the Reasons of the Point.

5. Make Application of the whole.

What 'tis to Acknowledg GOD.

1. *To Acknowledge God, Is to own the Being of God,* or *that God is,* or that there is one Eternal and Infinite Being: It was a great while before Proud *Pharoah* would do this, *And Pharoah said, Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice, to let Israel go? I know not the Lord;* I am the Soveraign Lord of *Egypt,* and I own no other Superiour here; What Lord hath Authority and Power over me, to command me? But the Lord was resolved to make him know him and acknowledge him before he had done with him, and therefore poured forth his Plagues upon him, and at last overthrew him in the Red Sea: Those who will not Acknowledge God, and so Grorifie his Dreadful Name, he will Glorifie himself upon them at last in their Destruction: *And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch forth my hand upon Egypt, and bring out the Children of Israel from among them.* Moreover it was a great while before *Nebuchadnezzer* would be brought to Acknowledge the Most High God, therefore *was he driven from men, and made to dwell with the Beasts of the Field, and to eat grass as Oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of Heaven, till his Hairs were grown like Eagles feathers, and his Nails like Birds Claws.* Though this is the least degree of Knowing and of Acknowledging God, yet many do not thus Acknowledge Him in their hearts: They Acknowledge Him with their Lips, but by their VVorks deny Him: *The Fool hath said in his heart there is no God.*

Exod. 5. 2.

Exod. 7. 5.

Dan. 4. 32. 33.

Psal. 53.

The Soveraignty of GOD to be Owned.

2. *To Acknowledge God, is not only to Acknowledge his Being, his Holy Essence, or Deity; but also that he is the Absolute Soveraign of the whole World,* and Sole Governour of all things in Heaven and Earth: *I know the Lord is great, and that our Lord is above all Gods. VVhatsoever the Lord pleaseth, that did he in Heaven and in Earth, and in all deep places,* v. 6. There is no bounds to his Power, but his own Will; *and what his Soul desireth that doth he.* God's Government is purely Arbitrary, and none but his ought to be so; His Will, His Law; yet is His Government most Righteous, because He can Will nothing but what is Just and Good. *Our God*

Psal. 135. 5.

Job 23. 13.

is in the Heavens he hath done whatsoever he pleaseth: He hath Power over all both Men and Devils, over Kingdoms and Nations, to dispose and determine them, and all things in them, as seemeth good to him. *Who shall say to him, What dost thou?* He that made all things, or gave being to all, must needs have Power over all, and be Lord of all; 'tis He that maketh War, and commandeth Peace; that sets Up, and pulleth Down; that Kills and maketh Alive: 'Tis the Glory of God; He hath such an Unlimated and an Uncontroulable Power, seeing he is Perfectly Just and Righteous, as his Power is Inconceivable, so his Will is Incorruptible: *I the Lord have spoken it, it shall come to pass, and I will do it, I will not go back.* As if the Lord should say, It is my will it should be done, and therefore it shall be done: His Counsel shall stand, and he will do all his Pleasure. Psal. 115. 3.

And this Brethren we should know; and this it is to Acknowledge God. But,

GODs Providence over all.

3. *To Acknowledge God, Is to Own and Acknowledge that all things come to pass by his All-wise Providence*: According to his Eternal Decree; either by his special *Commission*, or by his *Permission*; to say all things come to pass by Gods special Commmission, is to make him the author of Sin; but this know assuredly, that God did Determine, before time, that he would do such things, or permit or suffer such things to come to pass, and be done, or else it was impossible it should ever be done: *All the Motions of the Creature, even the most violent, and to appearance, Contingent Motions of the Creature, are under the Direction, yea, under the Dominion of God.* *Cayl*

All things Brethren, Move as they are Influenced by his Power, and Directed by his Wisdom. *Is there any Evil in the City, and I the Lord have not done it. Afflictions do not rise out of the dust*, Job. 6. 5. What Evil soever cometh upon Kingdoms or Nations, Cities or Families, or particular persons, 'tis by God's Wise Providence: *Evil came down from the Lord to the gates of Jerusalem.* Mich. 1. 12. God did not only make the World, but he disposeth of all Affairs and Matters therein, as he pleaseth; the government of the World is as much of God and his work, as the making of it; there is in all Occurrences or Transactions of Men, a Wheel within the Wheel, and this we ought to know and to acknowledge: This is to Acknowledge God.

The Omniſciency of GOD.

4. And from hence it followeth, *That to Acknowledge God, is to Acknowledge his Omniſciency: The eyes of the Lord run too and fro*

fro, through the whole earth, to shew himself strong in behalf of them whose heart is upright towards him, 2 Chron. 16. 9.

If God had not a perfect knowledge of all things, how could he govern the World? the Text that I mentioned last, shews two things.

1. *The perfect Knowledge God hath* of whatsoever is done throughout the whole Earth.

2. *His Providence over all*, even over the whole Earth, in ordering and disposing of all things therein, and particularly his care of his own People; *His eyes behold, his eye-lids try the children of men*, Psal. 11. 4. The Lord doth not only know all things and persons, but he hath a clear understanding of them: *All things are naked and manifest to his eyes with whom we have to do.* Heb. 4. 13. The Eye of God signifies the Knowledge of God, he sees as well what is in Man, as what is done by Man; *He knows our thoughts a far off*, before they are conceived, he knows what they will be; there is nothing done, nor intended to be done, but it is known by the Almighty; his Eyes are like a flaming Fire, of a piercing and and penitrating Nature: *The eyes of the Lord are every where, beholding the evil and the good*, Prov. 15. 3. Man sees the Face, the outside, but God searcheth and discerneth the Heart; the Eyes of Man may be deceived, but the Eyes of God cannot; Christ 'tis said, *needed not that any should testifie of man, for he knew what was in man*, Joh. 2. 25. this shews that he is the Eternal God, for, *thou knoweth all things*, (saith *Peter*) *thou knoweth that I love thee*, 21. 17. God's sight of Man, and of his Ways are Universal, and Everlasting; he saw all things with one single look from Everlasting to Everlasting; he knows all things past, present, and to come; *For his eyes are upon all the ways of man, and he seeth all his doings; there is no darkness nor shadow of death where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves*, Job 35. 21, 22: and as God is a God of Knowledge, so to acknowledge him, is to acknowledge his Omniscience.

The wisdom of God must be acknowledged,

5. To Acknowledge God, 'Tis to acknowledge and own his Infinite Wisdom; or, that he is a Most Wise God: And as he made all things in Wisdom, so he governs all things in Wisdom also, no Men have any true Wisdom but what they receive from God: the *Infiniteness*, the *Omniscience*, the *Unchangeableness*, and the *Simplicity* of God, *&c.* are Incommunicable Attributes; but the *Wisdom* of God together with his *Holyness*, *Justice*, and *Mercy*, are Communicable, *i. e.* God doth give, or communicate Holiness and Wisdom, *&c.* unto Angels and Men: God in-

deed

deed, is said to *be only Wise*, because none hath Wisdom of and from themselves but he, nor are any so Wise as he; his Wisdom so far excells the Wisdom of Men and Angels, that none are said to be wise but the Lord only; none are originally Wise but God; the Wisdom of God is not a separable Quality from him, (or from his Being,) as the Wisdom of Man is; many (as one notes) are Men, but not Wise Men. *Caryl.*

6. To Acknowledge God, Is to acknowledge his Justice and Holiness, *Judgment and Justice are the Habitation of his Throne*, Psal. 97. 2. He can do no Man any wrong, because he is Justice and Righteousness it self; whatsoever God brings upon a Nation, or People, or particular Person, 'tis Right, or in Righteousness. *Righteous art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee*, Jer. 12. 1. *Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do Right?* Gen. 18. 25. We may judge of his Justice and Righteousness, by considering of the nature of his Law, that is *Just*, *Holy*, and *Good*; what is the Law of God, but a written Impression of his Holy Nature; also the Justice and Righteousness of God is seen in his punishing the Wicked for their Sin; but more especially, in punishing his own Son when he came to stand in our stead and Law-place, as our Sponsor and blessed Surety; he *spared not his own Son*, as an act of Justice, when he undertakes to pay our Debts, or satisfie Divine Justice for our Offences. *God will render unto every man according to the fruit of their doings: he will not lay upon man more than is right*, Job 34. 23. *He hath punished us less than our iniquities deserve*, Ezra. 9. 13. *God's Justice.* *The goodness, mercy, and faithfulness of God must be acknowledged.*

7. To Acknowledge God, Is to acknowledge his *Goodness*, *Mercy*, and *Faithfulness*, his Mercy endureth for ever; *There is none good but God*, that is essentially good, perfectly good, and so there is none Righteous but he; he is a God *ready to forgive, plenteous in Mercy and Goodness; who is a God like unto thee pardoning Iniquity, Transgression and Sin*, Mich. 7. There is in God not only pardoning Goodness, but protecting preserving, redeeming, strengthning, and comforting Goodness. God is infinitely and immutably Good.

8. *To Acknowledge God, Is to own and acknowledge him to be man's chief good*, and that our only Happiness lies in him, not in the Creature, but in the Creator; not in having great Portions of worldly Goods, but in having a special Interest and Portion in God: *Many say who will shew us any good*, Psal. 4. 6. What was that good? why, *Corn*, *Oyl*, and *Wine*; but what saith *David*, *Lord lift up the light of thy countenance upon us, thou hast put more* *God Man's chiefest good.*

joy

joy into my heart, than the time when their corn and wine encreaseth, verse 7. 8. Earthly things may be called our goods, but not our good; they that never tasted, how good God is, never knew true good.

That cannot be Man's chief good, that cannot answer the necessities of his better part; namely, his Soul; God is a Soul Good, a Soul satisfying Good, a Soul Inriching Good; the Heathens laboured to find out what was the chief Good; and finding nothing in this world could satisfie the Soul, neither Riches, Honours, Pleasures, nor Knowledge; concluded, there was some Superiour Being, or an Infinite God, that must be Man's chiefest Good: that cannot be our chief Good, that cannot fill our Desires, nor make us truly and everlastingly Happy. Men may in the fulness of all their Sufficiency be in straits, and be miserable, who are possessed of never so great Riches, Honours, and earthly Pleasures; that which Sickness and Death may rob us of, cannot be our chiefest Good.

Use We never rightly acknowledge God until we know by our own Experience, and acknowledge him to be our chiefest and only Happiness.

To fear God is to acknowledge him.

9. *To Acknowledge God, Is to fear and reverence his dreadful Name*, and serve him as our God and only Soveraign of our Souls: *If I be a master, where is my fear? saith the Lord of Hosts*, Mal. 1. 6. The whole of Man's Duty is expressed sometimes by fearing of God; said *Joseph, Do this, and live, for I fear God*; He acknowledgeth God this way, and himself to be his Servant; *I fear God, I cannot, dare not Sin; how shall I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?* They that fear not God, are Men of no Religion: *The fear of God is the beginning of Wisdom.* Pray remember to Acknowledge God, is to fear him, and dread to offend or displease him.

To acknowledge God, when we trust in him.

10. To acknowledge God, Is to trust in him at all times, to make him our Hope and Help, to depend upon him for Counsel and Direction in all we go about, and submit our Wills to his Will, and patiently to take and endure whatsoever he lays upon us.

To Trust in God, Is to have Confidence in God, 'tis to lean upon God, upon his Wisdom, upon his Conduct, on his Strength, Faithfulness; and gracious Promises, and not to depend upon our own Wisdom; see the *verse* before my *Text*, *Trust in the Lord, and lean not to thy own Understanding, acknowledge him*, that is, Trust in him. To Trust in God, is also to expect and hope from God, and to wait for Counsel; indeed, it is the Character

of

of a godly Man to trust in God, as well as it is his Wisdom and Safety: We can (as one observes) never trust Man too little, nor in God too much; *Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm*, Jer. 17. 5. but blessed is the Man that Trusteth in the Lord, and whose Strength the Lord is.

To acknowledge God, is to acknowledge Christ to be God.

11. To Acknowledge God, *Is to acknowledge Jesus Christ to be God*; not God by Office, but God by Nature, *the only wise God*, the Eternal God, *Co-equal* with the Father, *Phil.* 2. 6. *Who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God*, though a distinct Subsistence or Person from the Father; yet one in Essence subsisting in the form of God, imports not Christ's Appearance, in exerting of God's Power, but his actual Existence in the Divine Nature: *To the only wise God our Saviour be glory and majesty, dominion and power*, Jude 25. *We are in him that is true; even in his Son Jesus Christ, this is the true God, and eternal life*, Joh. 5. 20. This it is to acknowledge God, *viz.* To own Christ to be God; *ye believe in God, believe also in me*, i.e. Ye acknowledge the Father is God, acknowledge the Son also to be the same God; it would be Idolatry to give Divine Adoration to Christ, if he was not the true Eternal God: Moreover, it would justifie the Blasphemy of the *Jews*, who charged him to be a Deceiver, and a Blasphemer; who, because he was (as they thought,) no more than a meer Man, made himself equal with God; not to acknowledge Christ to be God, is not truly and fully to acknowledge God, because Christ is God; we ought not only to acknowledge the Being of God, but also his manner of Being, or the three Persons in the God-head.

12. To Acknowledge God, Is to acknowledge all the good things we receive to come from him, whether Temporal or Spiritual, even Life and all the comforts of Life, Wisdom Knowledge, Riches, Honours, Friends, Peace, Health, Relations, Prosperity: And also 'tis to acknowledge all Afflictions, Troubles, Reproaches, Trials, even all kind of Adversity to come from God; for whoever may be the Instruments, yet God is the only Agent and Orderer of them.

13. And lastly, To Acknowledge God, is to love him above all; and to seek unto him, in all we do, and to strive to promote his Glory; he that is our chief Good should be our last end, our ultimate end: in all we do, we should aim at the Glory of God, and to carry on (with all uprightness) his Interest (to the utmost Power that is in us) in the places and stations where

where we are set by him. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, with all thy Soul, and with all thy Strength.* So much as to the first thing proposed to be opened; namely, What it is to acknowledge God.

Secondly, *I shall shew you in what ways of ours more particularly we should acknowledge God; or wherein we should acknowledge him.*

In all civil and religious Actions God to be acknowledged.

1. In entring upon no Civil nor Religious Action, without consulting with God, in and by his Word; we should put this Question to our own Hearts, *viz.* Is the thing that I am a going to do good, is it warranted by the word of God, is it according to his Will, will it tend to his Glory, is it not only lawful, but is it also expedient, if the matter I am a going to do be not justified by the word of God, though my end may be good, yet the thing is evil; may I do it and not offend God, or will it not hurt my Brother, or cause him to stumble? Were such Questions put by all Men to their own Hearts, it would prevent many Evils in Men's Civil Actions. Also, when Men enter upon any Religious Duty, they should consult the word of God, see whether the thing be warranted, hath God commanded me to do this thing, have I Precept, or Presedent to justifie me in doing of it?

Brethren, we are not to consult, *Men, General Counsels*, nor *Ancient Fathers*, but the Word of God; 'tis not Custom here will carry the Cause, though it be of some hundred of years standing; if from the beginning it was not so, nor is it sufficient, though many Learned Men, nay, Holy Men, assert it to be a Truth, if it be not written in God's Word. Where God hath no Tongue to speak, we should have no Ear to hear, nor Hand to do; but alas! some Men more consult their own Carnal Reason and Interest, their own Profits, their own Passions than God's Word and his Glory; many peruse their unwarrantable blind Zeal, like *Paul*, when a *Pharisee*, who verily thought he ought to do many things against the Name of Jesus of *Nazareth*, though it was to the making a fearful Slaughter of Christ's blessed Members.

2. Men should acknowledge God in all their Purposes, or about what they think to do, or intend to do, before they put them into Execution. Man sometimes purpose, and God disappoints: *Go to now, you that say to day or to morrow, we will go into such a City, and continue there a year, and buy and sell and get gain, whereas you know not what will be on the morrow.*

Jam. 4. 13, 14.

3. Men ſhould, before they enter upon any Action Civil or Religious, ſeek to God, by Prayer, for VViſdom and Direction; and alſo for Strength, Aid, and Aſſiſtance; and they that do not this, do not as they ought, Acknowledge God: and thus, I ſay, in a more general way, we ſhould do; though it be in the ſmalleſt matters, and in the doing of things that are Lawful to be done; if they would have Succeſs therein.

But to deſcend to ſome few particular things and caſes, about the doing, or entering upon the doing of which, we ſhould ſeek to God (and ſo in a right way Acknowledge him.)

1. *When any Young Men, or any Perſons begin to ſet up for themſelves, or to Trade in the World*; they ſhould Acknowledge God, or ſeek to him for Counſel and Direction about that Affair; that they may ſucceed well therein, and receive a Bleſſing from him; for in vain do Men riſe up early and ſit up late, unleſs God be ſought unto, and is pleaſed to proſper them in their Undertakings: How was *Jacob* Bleſſed as a Shepheard? which was his employment; who in all he did, Acknowledged God, and called upon him: Riches got, and not by the Almighty, or in a lawful way, will prove a Curſe to him that getteth the ſame: 'tis a God Provoking Evil, to ſay in thine heart, *My power, and the might of my hand, hath gotten me Wealth*; but *thou ſhalt remember the Lord thy God, for it is he that giveth thee power to get Wealth*, Deut. 8. 17, 18. Riches and Honour, which are a Bleſſing, and tendeth not to puff up a Man or Woman, cometh from God. *God counſel is from* GOD.

2. Men and Women, ſhould Acknowledge God in changing their condition; this is a great thing, and the Comfort of Mens Lives much conſiſt in this matter: *A Prudent Wife is from the Lord*, Prov. 19. 14. But alaſs! now a days, People in this matter, act like to the wicked Men of the old World; *They take them Wives of all which they chooſe* Gen. 6. 2. Which is charged upon them as a great ſin, and one cauſe of the Deſtruction brought upon them by the Flood; How did *Sampſon* ſuffer by his *Dalilah*, whom he choſe, becauſe he liked her well? perhaps ſhe was fair, but he conſulted not with God; but, How well did *Abraham*'s Servant ſucceed, in obtaining a Wife for *Iſaac*, his Maſter's Son? by Seeking unto God and Acknowledging him. *God to be acknowledged, in changing our condition.*

You Young Men and Women, that truly Fear God, ſee you to it; that you in the choice of Yokefellows, Acknowledge God; conſult his VVord, chooſe ſuch that are Godly, ſuch that Believe in Chriſt, let his VVrod be your Rule in this matter: *Be not unequally Yoaked with Unbelievers*: your Peace with God, and the

Comfort of your Lives depend on this matter; do not as the Sons of God in the old world did, and as *Sampſon* did, *viz.* Chooſe ſuch as you like; but ſuch as God likes and approves of.

3. We ſhould Acknowledge God, in Removing from one place to another, from one Countrey to another, or from one Habitation to another, or from one Trade or Employment to another: *We ſhould firſt ſeek the Kingdom of God.* Will this remove make for the profit of my precious Soul? Will it turn to the Glory of God? It ſhould not be, What Air, or what Earthly Profit may I find there, where I am going? but is the Goſpel Preached there, in the Purity of it? can I have communion with godly Chriſtians there? or, Will not my Spiritual Loſs be more than my Earthly gain? ſo in the other caſe; ſay, Will not more ſnares attend that Calling I am about to enter upon? Shall I not run my ſelf into Temptations by doing it? Doth not my preſent Employment bring me in Food and Rayment, and ought not I therewith to be Content? I only mentino theſe few Caſes as to our paths, in reſpect of Civil Affairs: you may add any other way or work you go about.

O! How doth it concern us to Acknowledge God, for Preſervation and a Bleſſing in all things? even in taking Journies by Land, or Voyages to Sea, and when we go out in the Morning, and return in the Evening; when we lie down, and when we riſe up, or enter upon any Religious Work.

1. About our Receiving, Retaining or Declining, of any one, or more Principles of Religion.

VVe ſhould Acknowledg God and Conſult with him, in and by his Holy VVord; we ought to examine and try the Point or Principle, we are about to Receive or Leave: Is it according to what is written? Doth God's word confirm it to be a Truth? Then receive it; but cry to God for VViſdom and Underſtanding in the Caſe; be fully perſwaded in thy own Conſcience from the word of God about it: On the other hand, if thou upon ſearching, canſt not find that Doctrine or particular Practice, thou haſt received formerly, is agreeable to Gods word; or that 'tis not in thy Judgment proveable therefrom; then after ſeeking unto God, thou oughteſt to reject it; though many Good Men, Learned Men, aſſert and maintain it to be Truth; thou art not to conſult with Men, nor acknowledge them to be thy rule, but God's VVord: *To the Law and Teſtimony: Search the Scripture:* Gods word giveth Underſtanding to the ſimple, *Pſal.* 119. 9, 10. *That is a Lamp to thy Feet, and a Light to thy Paths,*

Pſal.

Psal. 119. 105. Men, no not Ministers, shall be allowed to answer for thee at Christs Bar, about any Error thou hast received and dost maintain; every one must give an Account to God for himself; it will not be a good plea in that day, to say, Lord, such an able Minister held this Principle, Preach'd it, Practiced it; God may reveal some Truth more clearly to an *Aquilla* and a *Priscilla*, than to an Eloquent *Apollo*, Act. 18. 26.

2. Thou art to Acknowledge God, & seek to him, concerning what Minister, or Ministers, thou dost purpose to hear, and know their Doctrine well, and their Lives also; see that they Preach Christ, that they Preach the Gospel clearly; whose main design, is to Exalt *Jesus Christ* and the Free Grace of God; and particularly, that they are Sound about the Doctrine of Free Justification by the Righteousness of Christ, as it is Imputed and Received by Faith alone, without any mixture of Mans own Inherent Righteousness: O take heed; this day is Perilous; there are many that are Corrupters of Gods VVord, and perverters of Christs Gospel; thou mayst before thou art aware, be undone by dangerous Heresies.

3. Acknowledge God and seek to him, when thou art about to joyn thy self with some Church, in point of Communion; Examine their Faith, their Constitution, their Discipline; see they all hold weight with God's word.

And if thou art Tempted to leave a True Church, because of some offence taken; acknowledge God, seek to him, consult with the word of God, least it be from Satan, a Temptation, and arises from thy own Evil Heart; say, Shall I not be a Covenant Breaker, a Disorderly Person, and an Evil Example to others? VVill it not offend God, or stumble my weak Brother? Thus reason with thy Self; say, Shall I consult with Flesh and Blood, and gratifie my Corrupt part? This may deter thee from it.

3. Acknowledge God and Seek to him, when thou comest to hear the word of God Preached; say, Lord 'tis thou must prepare my heart to meet with thee this day; O open thou my Understanding, incline my VVill, move upon my Affections; deliver me from Drousiness, Deadness, Unbelief, & from all kind of Pride & Conceitedness, & from Prejudice against the Minister, or any Truth that he may deliver, that I want Light in. *What I know not teach thou me.* 'T is not man can reach thy heart; not the Ministers Voice, that can make thee Hear and Live; but the Voice of Christ; 'tis God that *can turn thee from Darkness to Light, & from the power of Satan unto God.* Thou mayest reform thy way,

or get some degree of Reformation, by thy natural powers improved, by the word Preached; but 'tis God alone must change thy Heart; a new Heart must be created in thee by God's mighty and glorious Creating-Power, and his Spirits operating Influences; it is God *that commanded the Light to shine out of Darkness, that must shine into our Hearts, to give us the Light of the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ*, 2 Cor. 4. 6. *We have this Treasure in earthen Vessels, that the excellency of the Power may be of God, and not of us*, verse 7. Do not trust to thine own Power, nor rebellious Will, 'tis God must make thee willing; he must draw thee, move thee, before thou canst come to Christ; *Faith is not of our selves, 'tis the gift of God*, Ephes. 2. 8. 9. 'tis God must turn thee from thy evil way, and change those vicious Habits that are in thee, and in all Men naturally; *Can the Æthiopian change his Skin*, &c. *Turn thou me, and I shall be turned.* O! thus
Jer. 31. 23. acknowledge God, & cry to him who works all our Works in us, and for us; *'Tis not in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but of God that sheweth Mercy*, Rom. 9. 17. Did Men thus acknowledge God, he would soon direct their Path, and give Success to them in their Duties. Ministers should also acknowledge God in their Gifts and Endowments (what have they which they have not received) and their own Insufficiency.

5. We should acknowledge God, when we come to draw near to him in the Holy Supper of the Lord; it is he that must prepare our Hearts, for this his sacred Ordinance also; *The preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue are from the Lord*, Prov. 16. 1. What Heavenly Comfort do we meet with, or have we met with at one time more than at another? How lively are our Spirits, and active our Graces, when God vouchsafeth his Divine Influences, and quickens us in our Duties? *Did we muse, the Fire might soon burn:* 'Tis God must deliver us from vain Thoughts, worldly Thoughts, when we draw near to him, and stir up our Affections, and raise our Spirits; therefore thus let us acknowledge him, that we may set under Christ's Shadow with delight, that his Fruit may be sweet to our Taste.

But no more as to these more ordinary ways of ours, whether Civil, or Religious; but to proceed to that which is the chief Work of this day.

We ought to acknowledge God in divers special Cases.

1. *As in choice of Ministers*, to watch over us, and take the care of our Souls, we should acknowledge God who hath promised *to give us Pastors after his own heart, to feed us with knowledge and understanding*, Jer. 3. 15.

2. In

2. *In choice of Magiſtrates to rule us*, or to repreſent us in National Synods, and make *Civil Laws*; we ought to acknowledge God, who hath promiſed to *give Judges as at the firſt, and Counſellors as at the beginning*. How good was *Jethro's* Counſel to *Moſes*, Exod. 18. 21. *Moreover, thou ſhalt provide out of all the people, able men, ſuch as fear God, men of truth, hateing covetouſneſs; and place ſuch over them to be rulers*, &c. Did *Jethro* ſpeak this only, or hath not God ſpoken it alſo; *The God of* Iſrael *ſaid, the rock of* Iſrael *ſpoke to me; he that ruleth over men, muſt be juſt ruling in the fear of God*, 2. Sam. 23. 3. I am afraid many Men do not in this caſe ſo conſult with God, nor acknowledge him as they ought; were ſuch Men always choſe, what a happy People ſhould we be, or would *England* be. But,

3. *We ſhould acknowledge God, and look to him, when difficult caſes may be before a King, and his People*; in which the good and welfare of a whole Nation is concerned; nay, many Nations; and not only ſo, but alſo the good of God's *Iſrael*, as now at this day: O how ſhould we cry to God, who only is able to give Counſel, and direct our worthy Senators: *By me Kings Reign, and Princes decree Judgment*, (ſaith our Lord Jeſus) *Prov.* 8. 15. All great and good things that Kings and Princes do, is from God, and by the Influences of Jeſus Chriſt: *God ſits amongſt the Gods*; he can rule, and over-rule Men's Hearts at his pleaſure, at ſuch a time as this: *Ezra* ſought a right way, to do, which, he acknowledge God, he ſought to him: We may bleſs God who put it into the Hearts of the *King* and *Parliament*, to ſeek God at this difficult time; certainly the Finger of God is in this matter: Saith *Ezra, And I proclaimed a Faſt there at the River* Ahava, *that we might afflict our ſelves before our God, and ſeek a right way for our ſelves, and for our little ones, and for all our Subſtance*, Ezra 8. 21. *For I was aſhamed to require of the King a Band of Soldiers and Horſemen, to help us againſt the Enemy, becauſe I ſaid the hand of our God is upon all them that ſeek him for good*, verſe 22.

This it appears is the right way, moſt pleaſing to God, the only way to obtain the Mercy we want, *viz.* to humble our ſelves, and ſeek to God; this is that way God directeth us to take: *Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver you, and ye ſhall glorifie me*, Pſal. 50. 14. 50. 'tis the right way to obtain Mercy, to exalt the Eternal Being, to magnifie God; yea, and this is the right way according to the avowed Principles of all true Chriſtians: *I was aſhamed*, ſaith this good Man, *to ask a Band of Soldiers*; becauſe our God hath promiſed his Hand ſhall

be with us for good; that he was able and ready to help them that seek him, and put their trust in him: I might also note from hence, that we are allowed to cry to God, not only for our selves, and little Ones; but that God would bless and preserve our Substance also.

4. *Another special Occasion that calls upon us in an extraordinary manner, to acknowledge God, and seek unto him, Is in a time of great Afflictions*; when God's People are in Distress and great Danger.

Thus did *Jacob*, Gen. 33. when he heard, how his enraged Brother *Esau* was coming out to meet him with 400 Armed Men, to cut him off, with his Wives and Children.

How did he wrestle with God? *He wept and made Supplication*; & also said, *I will not let thee go, except thou bless me*, Gen. 32 26 And he said, *What is thy Name?* and he said, *Jacob*; and he said, *Thy Name shall be called no more* Jacob, *but* Israel; *for as a Prince hast thou Power with God and Men, and hast prevailed*, verse 27. All that thus wrestle with God, God accounts Princes; they are *Prevailers* with God; they overcome God in a spiritual manner, and prevail over Men, nay, over Devils, and all Heliish Lusts, and the powers of Darkness. *Esau* shall not hurt thee, (as if God should have said) *I will prevent thy present Fear and Danger:* Thus *Jacob* at this time, when in great Straits and Afflictions, acknowledged God.

This also did the Children of *Israel* in *Egypt*, under their grievous Bondage and Misery: They cryed to the Lord, and God heard their Crys and their Groans, *Exod.* 2. 23. 24. and looked upon them, and had respect to them, *verse* 5.

Moreover, Thus *Moses* and poor *Israel* acknowledged God, when they were pursued by bloody *Pharoah*, and brought to the Red Sea: *Stand still*, saith *Moses*, *and see the Salvation of the Lord*; have your hope in him, trust in him, acknowledge his Power, in this time of your dismal Danger: *The* Egyptian, *whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.* Let not your Hearts fail, sink, nor stagger through Unbelief; but with Faith and quiet Minds look to God, and you shall (as if *Moses* should have said) soon see an end of your cursed Enemies.

Exod. 14. 13.

Also thus did *Samuel* with all *Israel*, look to God, when the *Philistines* came against them, they fasted on that day, and said, *We have sinned against the Lord*, 1 Sam. 2. 6. Likewise thus did good King *Jehosaphat*, when the Children of *Moab* and *Amon* came

came againſt him, and againſt *Judah*: *Jehoſophat feared, and ſet himſelf to ſeek the Lord, and proclaimed a Faſt throughout all* Judea, 2 *Chron.* 20. 3. Moreover, when *Nehemiah* ſaw how the remnant of God's People that were left of the Captivity, were in great Afflictions, and the Wall of *Jeruſalem* was alſo broken down, he acknowledged God, and cry'd to him, *Neh.* 1. 3. *O Lord, I beſeech thee let now thine Ear be attentive unto the Prayer of thy Servant; and the Prayers of thy Servants, who deſire to fear thy Name*, &c. *verſe* 11.

Thus alſo did *Eſther* and *Mordecai*, ſeek to the Lord, and acknowledge him; when the poor *Jews* were in danger of being all cut off in one day, they faſted, and prayed unto God.

5. We ſhould acknowledge God, *when we have any great Work to do for his holy Name*, as was when we are about to reform, or labour after Reformation in Religion, or to throw down *Idolatry* or *Superſtition*: Thus did good King *Joſias in the twelfth year of his Reign, he began to ſeek after the God of* David, *and to purge* Judah *and* Jeruſalem *from the high places and the Groves, and carved Images*, &c. 2 *Chron.* 34. 4. Moreover, when Miniſters enter on their Miniſtry, they ſhould ſeek to God, acknowledge him, wholly deſign his Glory, and depend upon his Strength, for Help, and Succeſs.

6. *When great things are near at hand, or ſome mighty appearance of God for the glory of his Name, and ſalvation of his Church, and exaltation of* Sion, *and downfall of their Enemies*, God ſhould be ſought unto, and be acknowledged by his own People: thus did *Daniel*, Dan. 9. 2. *I* Daniel *underſtood by Books, the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the Prophet, that he would accompliſh ſeventy years in the deſolations of* Jeruſalem. *And I ſet my face unto the Lord God, to ſeek by Prayer and Supplications with Faſting, and Sackcloth, and Aſhes*, verſe 3.

Brethren, Thus it is with us, we underſtand by Books, *i.e.* by the Book of *Daniel*, the *Revelations of St.* John, and by the Writings of good Men, that the number of the years of our ſpiritual Captivity under miſtical Babylon, is near expired; and that glorious things are near; and therefore we ſhould now in an extraordinary manner cry to God, and acknowledge his Power, and Wiſdom, and Faithfulneſs. O look up, *the Viſion will* (ſuddenly) *ſpeak.*

Thirdly, *How we ſhould acknowledge God, or after what manner be found in this Duty?* How we ſhould Acknowledge GOD.

1. In

1. In the Sense of our Sins, and Sins of the Lord's People, & of the whole Nation; yea, with a through sight & sense of Sin, and with self abhorrence for the same: Thus did *Samuel* acknowledge God, and poured out Water before the Lord, at *Mizpah*; 1 *Sam.* 7. 6. and thus did *Daniel*, he confessed his Sins, and the Sins of the People; *We have sinned, and have committed Iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled even by departing from thy Precepts, and from thy Judgments*, Dan. 9. 5. *Neither have we hearkned unto the Prophets which have spoken in thy Name to our Kings and Princes, and our Fathers, and to all the People.* O what Sins are we guilty of, and this vile Nation guilty of, whom God hath been so good and gracious unto, and saved with an high Hand, and deliver'd, when (some time ago) all was a going that is dear to us.

2. With all Humility and brokenness of Heart we should acknowledge, that what soever is come upon us, is in Justice, and Righteousness; we must say with *Daniel*, *O Lord, Righteousness belongeth unto thee; but unto us, Confusion of Faces, as at this day to the men of* Judah, *and the Inhabitants of* Jerusalem; *to all* Israel *that are near and far off*, &c. *because of our Trespasses: O Lord, to us belongeth Confusion, to our Kings, and to our Princes, and to our Fathers, because we have sinned.* How low should we lie every one of us, and labour to find out the plague of his own Heart; and to smite on our Breasts, and say, *What have I done?* we must say, *It is of the Lord's Mercy we are not consumed*; that we are yet a People, and *England* a Nation, not yet utterly forsaken of God; In our acknowledging of God, *we should humble our selves, and pray*; and not only so, *but turn every one from his evil way; so will God hear from Heaven, and will forgive our Sins, and heal our Land*, 2 Chron. 7. 14.

3. We should acknowledge God with a sense of our Weakness, Ignorance, and short sightedness, and not trust to our own Understanding: See the *Context*, *Trust in the Lord with all thine Heart, and lean not to thine own Understanding*, Prov. 3. 5.

Let not Men think their Wisdom is sufficient to act and accomplish those great Designs that they take in Hand; because they are so acute, and have such clear natural Parts, or acquired Parts: *Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom; nor the strong man glory in his strength.* Let not the Learned Man boast of his great Learning, but let all know, True Wisdom is from God; 'tis he must guide us in Judgment; Brethren, 'tis a good sign God will not leave us, in that he hath put it into the Heart of our *Parliament*,

ment, to acknowledge God, and seek to him *a right way*: At this difficult hour, it argues that they see need to ask Counsel of him, and would acknowledge him, from whom Wisdom, to manage the great Affairs of Nations cometh, and would not lean to their own Understanding: God is the great Governour of the World.

4. We should acknowledge God in Christ, come to him only, and look to him alone in a Mediator; if we do not wholly acknowledge him in the Name of *Jesus Christ*, all we do will be in vain; for out of Christ he is a God of Wrath and Fury; yea, a *flaming and devouring Fire*; but in Christ, he is pacified and reconciled to all that so come to him; *Samuel* well knew this, and therefore *he took a sucking Lamb, and offered it for a Burnt-Offering, wholly unto the Lord*, 1 Sam. 7. 9. This Lamb no doubt tipified Christ Jesus, in and by whose Sacrifice only, he forsaw God was appeased, and his Justice satisfied, and the guilt of the Sins of God's *Israel* removed. *God must be acknowledged, in Christ.*

Christ is the only way to the Father; *No man cometh to the Father but by me*, saith our blessed Lord, *John* 14. 6. This Brethren, and none but this, is *the right way*: *Sinners* are only to draw near to *God* by Christ; this way is prepared for them, cast up for them; this is *that new and living way*: And Saints have no other way to come to *God*, nor to acknowledge *God* to be their *God*, but only in Christ.

O Acknowledge *God* thus, *God was in Christ, reconciling the World to himself*, 2 Cor. 5. 19. *God* in Christ is strong to save, strong to help, strong to deliver: *Christ is the power of God, and and the wisdom of God*, 1 Cor. 1. 18. The glory of his Power, Mercy, Wisdom, Justice, and *Goodness*, are all united, and shine forth to save Sinners in Christ, and to save Nations, who look to him, and acknowledg'd him in Christ.

Almighty *Power* was seen in creating of the World, and his *Power* in conjunction with his *Justice* was seen, in casting the Angels that sinned, out of Heaven, and Man out of Paradice; and *Divine Power*, as it was joyned with *Divine Mercy*, shone forth, in saving and delivering *Israel* at the *Red Sea*; but in Christ, the glory of his *Power*, *Mercy* and *Justice*, and all other of his glorious Attributes, are united together in sweet Harmony, to save and help all that by Christ come to him; nothing can hinder our Help and Succour, if we acknowledge and come to him in *Jesus Christ*.

We should acknowledge *God manifested in the Flesh*, 1 Tim. 3. 16.

not only that Christ is God, (as I before hinted) but the reason why he took unto him our Nature, and what things he hath wrought out for us; & how the glory of God shines forth in him.

We never acknowledge God in the *Top Glory* of his *Wisdom*, *Mercy*, *Love*, *Power*, *Justice* and *Goodness*, unless we acknowledge him in Christ; nor can we know him any other way to be our God, nor come to him, nor expect any Help, Relief, Pardon or Peace, from him: We must acknwledge what Christ is made of, God the Father unto us, even *Wisdom and Righteousness*, *Sanctification*, and *Redemption*: He is our *Life*, our *Light*, our *Righteousness*, our *Strength*, our *Peace*, our *Food*, our *Guide*, our *King*, to Rule us, our *Priest*, to Attone for our Sins, and to Intercede for us, and our *Prophet* to Teach us.

In him, God is our Father, our Friend, our Portion; in him, we may come to God with holy Boldness; *All the promises of God are in him, yea, and in him, amen, to the glory of God the Father.*

GOD *to be acknowledged in Faith.*

5. *We must acknowledge God by Faith:* God is never acknowledg'd in Christ aright, but by Faith; we must believe, if we would be accepted, to believe in Christ, or come to God by Faith in Christ, is the way to be justified, to be pardoned, and to obtain all things whatsoever we want.

To Believe, is to trust in God through Christ, to relie upon God through *Jesus Christ*, to rest on God's Power and Mercy through Christ, to receive him for all, as he is offered in the Gospel, 'tis to depend upon God's faithful Promises: *He that cometh to me, I will no wise cast out*, John 6. 36. *He is able to save to the uttermost, all that come to God by him; seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us*, Heb. 7. 25.

O! Remember that you acknowledge God by Faith, in the Death, Resurrection, and Intercession of Jesus Christ: *We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous*, 1 John 2. 1, 2. Whatsoever we ask in Christ's Name, in Faith, that is agreeable to the Will of God, we shall receive from him.

GOD *to be Acknowledged always.*

6. We should acknowledge God constantly; always, from first to last; not only when we stand in the greatest need of him, when we are Low, or Poor, but also when we are High, Rich, and in a prosperous Condition: *Agar* desired not Riches, lest he should, when full, deny God, and say, *Who is the Lord*, Prov. 30. 9. *Trust in the Lord at all times*, saith *David*: *Will the Hypocrite always call upon God*: No, no, in Afflictions he may, and often doth, when God's Chastenings are upon him, then he will cry to him, and seek him; but to call upon God, and acknowledge him,

him, and seek his Glory, and depend upon him, and look for Success always in all things, at all times from God; is only the Character of a true Christian.

We can never be in so high a state, never arrive to such a degree of Wisdom, or have Riches in so great abundance; but we have need to acknowledge God, and depend upon him; no Man living, but stands in need of God's help.

And there is no Man so low, so poor, so destitute, but God can raise him, help him, and relieve him: Man's Being, and well Being, is only from God.

7. God is to be acknowledg'd in Truth and Uprightness of Heart; if we fail here, all our Humiliations will be in vain; Hypocritical Fasts are abominable to God; Is it because we have Sinned, and God thereby hath been dishonoured? or, Is it not rather for *Corn*, *Wine*, and *Oyl*, that we cry to God this day? Is it not for a deliverance from our Miseries, rather than from our Iniquities? *When you fasted and mourned*, &c. *did you* (saith the Lord) *fast unto me*? Zech. 7. 5. Let all Men see to this, for if we are not sincere, God looks upon our Prayers with disdain: *They have not cryed to me with their Heart, when they howled on their Beds, they assemble themselves for Corn and Wine, and they rebel against me*, Hos. 7. 14.

GOD *must be Acknowledged sincerely.*

They do it (as if God should say) for Peace and Plenty; they have the World in their Eye; not my Glory, but their own Carnal Interest, for they live still in their Sins; and rebel against me: Let *England*, and the Inhabitants of this City see to this, least they should be found in the like Abomination this day, with *Israel* of old.

But to come to the Reason of this Doctrine.

Fourthly, *Why we should in all our ways acknowledge God:*

First, Because Wisdom and Counsel is from the Lord; none can act or do any thing for God, in a right way, and to a right end, or for their own good, unless helped and influenced by the Almighty. *There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding*, Job 32. 8. Who is it that teacheth *Senators* Wisdom, but the Lord: Alas! all Mens meer Natural Wisdom, of which they sometimes boast, it is but Foolishness, when compared to that right spiritual Wisdom, which he can give them: Meer natural Men, or Men without the Divine Wisdom of God, are often influenced by the Devil: *Satan* is a great *Politician*: *Go to, we will deal wisely*, saith *Pharaoh*: Ay, but that Wisdom was from be-

Wisdom & Counsel from God only.

not only that Christ is God, (as I before hinted) but the reason why he took unto him our Nature, and what things he hath wrought out for us; & how the glory of God shines forth in him.

We never acknowledge God in the *Top Glory* of his *Wisdom*, *Mercy*, *Love*, *Power*, *Justice* and *Goodness*, unless we acknowledge him in Christ; nor can we know him any other way to be our God, nor come to him, nor expect any Help, Relief, Pardon or Peace, from him: We must acknowledge [illegible]

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O! Remember that you acknowledge God by Faith, in the Death, Resurrection, and Intercession of Jesus Christ: *We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous*, 1 John 2. 1, 2. Whatsoever we ask in Christ's Name, in Faith, that is agreeable to the Will of God, we shall receive from him.

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him, and ſeek his Glory, and depend upon him, and look for Succeſs always in all things, at all times from God; is only the Character of a true Chriſtian.

We can never be in ſo high a ſtate, never arrive to ſuch a degree of Wiſdom, or have Riches in ſo great abundance; but we have need to acknowledge God, and depend upon him; no Man living, but ſtands in need of God's help.

And there is no Man ſo low, ſo poor, ſo deſtitute, but God can raiſe him, help him, and relieve him: Man's Being, and well Being, is only from God.

7. God is to be acknowledg'd in Truth and Uprightneſs of Heart; if we fail here, all our Humiliations will be in vain; Hypocritical Faſts are abominable to God; Is it becauſe we have Sinned, and God thereby hath been diſhonoured? or, Is it not rather for *Corn*, *Wine*, and *Oyl*, that we cry to God this day? Is it not for a deliverance from our Miſeries, rather than from our Iniquities? *When you faſted and mourned*, &c. *did you* (ſaith the Lord) *faſt unto me*? Zech. 7. 5. Let all Men ſee to this, for if we are not ſincere, God looks upon our Prayers with diſdain: *They have not cryed to me with their Heart, when they howled on their Beds, they aſſemble themſelves for Corn and Wine, and they rebel againſt me*, Hoſ. 7. 14. *GOD muſt be Acknowledged ſincerely.*

They do it (as if God ſhould ſay) for Peace and Plenty; they have the World in their Eye; not my Glory, but their own Carnal Intereſt, for they live ſtill in their Sins; and rebel againſt me: Let *England*, and the Inhabitants of this City ſee to this, leaſt they ſhould be found in the like Abomination this day, with *Iſrael* of old.

But to come to the Reaſon of this Doctrine.

Fourthly, *Why we ſhould in all our ways acknowledge God:*

First, Becauſe Wiſdom and Counſel is from the Lord; none can act or do any thing for God, in a right way, and to a right end, or for their own good, unleſs helped and influenced by the Almighty. *There is a ſpirit in man, and the inſpiration of the Almighty giveth him underſtanding*, Job 32. 8. Who is it that teacheth *Senators* Wiſdom, but the Lord: Alas! all Mens meer Natural Wiſdom, of which they ſometimes boaſt, it is but Fooliſhneſs, when compared to that right ſpiritual Wiſdom, which he can give them: Meer natural Men, or Men without the Divine Wiſdom of God, are often influenced by the Devil: *Satan* is a great *Politician*: *Go to*, *we will deal wiſely*, ſaith *Pharoah*: Ay, but that Wiſdom was from be- *Wiſdom & Counſel from God only.*

not only that Christ is God, (as I before hinted) but the reason why he took unto him our Nature, and what things he hath wrought out for us; & how the glory of God shines forth in him.

We never acknowledge God in the *Top-Glory* of his *Wisdom, Mercy, Love, Power, Justice* and *Goodness*, unless we acknowledge him in Christ; nor can we know him any other way to be our God, nor come to him, nor expect any Help, Relief, Pardon or Peace, from him: We must acknwledge what Christ is made of, God the Father unto us, even *Wisdom and Righteousness, Sanctification*, and *Redemption*: He is our *Life*, our *Light*, our *Righteousness*, our *Strength*, our *Peace*, our *Food*, our *Guide*, our *King*, to Rule us, our *Priest*, to Attone for our Sins, and to Intercede for us, and our *Prophet* to Teach us.

In him, God is our Father, our Friend, our Portion; in him, we may come to God with holy Boldness; *All the promises of God are in him, yea, and in him, amen, to the glory of God the Father.*

GOD *to be acknowledged in Faith.*

5. *We must acknowledge God by Faith:* God is never acknowledg'd in Christ aright, but by Faith; we must believe, if we would be accepted, to believe in Christ, or come to God by Faith in Christ, is the way to be justified, to be pardoned, and to obtain all things whatsoever we want.

To Believe, is to trust in God through Christ, to relie upon God through *Jesus Christ*, to rest on God's Power and Mercy through Christ, to receive him for all, as he is offered in the Gospel, 'tis to depend upon God's faithful Promises: *He that cometh to me, I will no wise cast out*, John 6. 36. *He is able to save to the uttermost, all that come to God by him; seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us*, Heb. 7. 25.

O! Remember that you acknowledge God by Faith, in the Death, Resurrection, and Intercession of Jesus Christ: *We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous*, 1 John 2. 1, 2. Whatsoever we ask in Christ's Name, in Faith, that is agreeable to the Will of God, we shall receive from him.

GOD *to be Acknowledged always.*

6. We should acknowledge God constantly; always, from first to last; not only when we stand in the greatest need of him, when we are Low, or Poor, but also when we are High, Rich, and in a prosperous Condition: *Agar* desired not Riches, lest he should, when full, deny God, and say, *Who is the Lord*, Prov. 30. 9. *Trust in the Lord at all times*, saith *David*: *Will the Hypocrite always call upon God*: No, no, in Afflictions he may, and often doth, when God's Chastenings are upon him, then he will cry to him, and seek him; but to call upon God, and acknowledge him,

him, and ſeek his Glory, and depend upon him, and look for Succeſs always in all things, at all times from God; is only the Character of a true Chriſtian.

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below, it was from the Devil, and such Wisdom God can soon confound; Man's Wisdom is to take Counsel of God, and seek to him; *The fear of God, is the beginning of wisdom.*

It is Mans Duty to acknowledge GOD.

Secondly, Men ought to acknowledge God, *because he doth require, and Command them so to do*: it *is their Duty to do it*; and their great Sin that do not seek to him: Brethren, what Blessing can Men expect to meet with in their undertakings, that asked not Counsel of the Lord: How were the People of *Israel* blamed and punished, for doing some things without asking Counsel of him? *Josh.* 9. 14. *But they asked not counsel at the mouth of God.* It was about making Peace with them that they were commanded to Destroy, and not to make a Covenant of Peace with: God also prononnced a Woe to his People, for their neglect herein; *Woe to the rebellious Children*, saith the Lord, *that take Counsel, but not of me*, &c. *Isa.* 30. 1. *that walk to go down into* Egypt, *and have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of* Pharoah, *verse* 2.

Call upon me in the day of trouble, Psal. 50. 14. Prayer is owing to God for every thing, (in Prayer, &c.) we should let our Request be made known to the Lord.

GOD *can give wisdom to the Simple.*

Thirdly, Because God can give Wisdom, to them that are esteemed simple, weak and ignorant Men; he can make the Foolish, Wise, and put his Spirit upon them: What Wisdom did he give to *Moses*, who kept his Father-in-law's Sheep? and what a famous Judge and Ruler did God make him to be? It is true, he was trained up in the Wisdom of *Egypt* before, but that was foolishness with God.

What Wisdom did he give to *David*, who was but a *Shepherd*, and to *Amos* a *Herdsman*: Moreover, what Wisdom did he give to the Disciples of Christ, who were some of them but *Fisher-men*, and deemed unlearned and ignorant Men; God makes choice of the weak and base things of the World, to confound the Mighty; and of the Foolish, to bring to naught the Wisdom of the Wise.

GOD *disposeth of all Affairs.*

Fourthly, God ought to be acknowledged by all Men, in all Matters; because 'tis by his wise Providence (as you have heard) *that all things are governed, ordered, and disposed of, throughout the whole Earth*; not only the Affairs of particular Persons, but the Concernments and Affairs of Nations and Kingdoms much more.

1. *In all Civil Affairs in respect of Government*, &c. All the Counsels of the Mighty are influenced by the Lord: *God judgeth*

amongst the Gods; the Shields of the Earth belong to the Lord, Psal. 47. 9. *'Tis by me Kings Reign, and Princes decree Judgment*; he sets up, and pulleth down at his Pleasure.

2. *All Military Actions of Nations*, are ordered by the Almighty, War and Peace are from him; if he take Peace from the Earth, in vain do all Counsellors and great Statesmen meet, and consult about Peace: hence God is called, *The Lord of Hosts, and a Man of War*: or, The great General of Armies.

He hath opened his Armoury, and has brought forth his Weapons of Indignation. Saith *David*, *He teaches my Hands to War, and my Fingers to Fight*: He is a God of Influence and Authority; he Commands all, and none can stand before him; at his Command, *Frogs* invade *Pharoah*: from hence it appears, that a Martial Imployment is very Honourable, *viz.* when the Cause is good, when 'tis for his Glory, and for the Honour and Safety of a King, and People: God being called *the Lord of Hosts, the God of the Armies of* Israel; puts a Lustre and Dignity upon a General of an Army engaged in a Just Cause.

3. *In all Ecclesiastical Affairs, or Matters respecting the Church of God*, he ought to be acknowledged; nay, in this matter, before all things, we ought to seek unto him, who is in a peculiar Sense stiled, *The King of Saints, and God of* Israel. He that is the Head of the Church, is the Absolute Governour thereof; the Spiritual Rights of his People, and the Rule of Men's Consciences, is only under his Power and Influences; and his Laws only are the Bond and Limits of his Goverument; no altering, adding to, nor diminishing from his holy Precepts: the Power to Rule the Church, is Christ's Prerogative alone; as he is *God*, it is essentially and absolutely in his Hand; and as Mediator, this Power is given to him by the Father: *All Power is given to me in Heaven, and in Earth: go ye therefore teach all Nations*, Mat. 28. 19, 20. Moreover, the Peace and Prosperity of God's Church and People, as also all their Trouble and Adversity is from him. *Who gave* Jacob *to the Spoil, and* Israel *to the Robbers? Did not the Lord against whom they had sinned?* Whosoever are the Instruments in either case, God is in a special manner the great Agent in it, it was he that brought again the Captivity of *Sion*; it was God that stirred up *Cyrus* to proclaim Liberty for the *Jews*, to Build their City and Temple.

And

And when he comes to build up *Sion*, in these last days; he will appear in his Glory, and will undo all that have afflicted his People; for they that touch them, touch the Apple of his Eye. Let the *French Tyrant*, *Pope* and *Turk* look to it; their day is near; for *God will plead the Controversie of* Sion, *and come upon Princes as upon Mortar; and as the Potter treadeth the Clay*, Isa. 41. 25. His Sword is bathed in Heaven, *God will come with vengeance, even God, with a recompence he will come and save you*, Isa. 35. 4. It will not be long before you will hear *the voice of them that flee, and escap'd out of* Babylon, *to declare in* Sion, *the vengeance of the Lord our God, the vengeance of his Temple*, Jer. 50. 28. O! therefore let us look to him, acknowledge him, for these things are very near.

Again, as all Affairs, both *Civil*, *Military*, and *Ecclesiastical*, are in the Hand of God, and ordered by his wise Counsel; so are all Creatures likewise.

1. The good Angels are under his Authority and Influence, they all wait for his Word, and obey his Command, either to protect his own People, or execute his Wrath upon their Enemies.

2. The evil Angels are also under his Power; *Satan* is limited by him, he is in Chains, God sets Bounds to him, he can go no further than his Chains will suffer him; 'tis not who he will, but who he may devour; he could not touch *Job*, nor any thing he had, till God gave him liberty; the Devils could not go into the *Herd of Swine*, till Christ said, *go*.

3. All men also are subjected to his Authority, & he can at his Pleasure restrain the wrath of wicked Men, or make it tend to his own Praise: *Thou hast no Power, except it be given thee of my Father*, saith Christ to *Pilate*.

4. All Irrational Creatures are at his Command, he can stop the Mouths of *hungry Lyons*, so that they could do *Daniel* no hurt: Nay, and he can give *David* power to destroy both the *Lyon* and the *Bear*: The *Lord opened the Mouth of the Ass, to speak with Man's Voice, to rebuke the madness of the Prophet.*

Moreover, He caused two *She Bears* to tare 42 Children, for their reproaching of *Elisha*; and who was it but the Lord, that sent the *Lyon* to slay the young *Prophet*, who transgressed against him.

Moreover, Remarkable is the passage of his causing a *Raven* to feed *Elisha* when distressed.

He hath also Power over, and ruleth and disposeth of all *Inanimate Creatures*, *the Winds and Sea obey him*, and are at his Command; he can make the Sun stand still, or go back, if he please;

'tis He that makes the Grass to grow, the Sun to shine, and the Rain to fall; 'tis He that *gives Rain and fruitful Seasons*, and who sometimes smites, and brings a Blast and Mildew upon the Fruits the Earth; therefore all ought to acknowledge him.

All Judgments God can soon remove.

Fifthly, We ought to acknowledge God, because, as all Judgments and Plagues are from him, so he can at his Pleasure remove them. *I Form the Light, and create Darkness; I make Peace, and create Evil; I the Lord do all these things*, Isa. 45. 7. *and if he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble; and when he hideth his face, who can behold him, whether it be done against a Nation, or against a Man only*, Job 34. 29.

If God will give those Nations Quietness, where it is not, or continue it where it is; there is no Power on Earth, or Hell, can hinder, or prevent it: Who can Curse them that God will Bless? or, Bless such that God doth Curse? *There is no inchantment against* Jacob, *neither is there any divination against* Israel, *Numb.* 23. 23. but Woe to that Nation, or Person, God hideth his Face from; for then he withdraws his gracious Care and Protection, and then he will not hear their Prayers also, then he will not give them Counsel; nay, but will do more, he will leave them to their own Counsel, as he did *Israel*, Psal. 81. 12.

God can make use of unlikely means or Persons successful.

Sixthly, We would acknowledge God in all things, because he can make use of unlikely ways, means, or persons to do his own Work; by the blowing of Rams Horns, he made the Walls of *Jericho* to fall down, *Josh.* 7. 5. He spoiled *Pharaoh*, and the *Egyptians*, by an Army of *Frogs*, *Locusts*, *Lice*, *Flies*, &c. What wonders did he do with 300 Men? God, as one observes, can strike a strait Blow with a crooked Stick; 'tis not for the worthiness of the Instruments, that he doth work, but for his own Glory.

All Success is from GOD.

Seventhly, Because all success in our ways and undertakings are from God, Rulers of Nations, Magistrates, and Ministers, cannot do any thing unless God Bless them, and his Hand go along with them: *I have planted, and* Apollo *watered; but it is God that giveth the increase*, 1 Cor. 3. 6.

The Plow-man plows in vain; the Trades-man buys and sells, and Trades in vain; the Merchant and Mariners venter to Sea in vain; the Physician prescribes Medicines in vain; nay, Magistrates rule in vain, and Ministers Preach in vain, and the People hear in vain; if God denies Success, or prospereth them not: *It is vain to rise up early, and sit up late, and eat the bread of Carefulness*; if God doth not bless the labour of their Hands;

Be-

Behold, *Is it not of the Lord of Hosts, that the people shall labour in the very fire, and the People shall weary themselves for very vanity?* Hab. 2. 13. 'Tis not the Care of the Husband-man to wait for the proper Season to Sow his Seed, nor the Industry of the Trader, nor the Skill of the Physician, nor the Wisdom and Policy of the States-man, nor the Learning of the Gospel Minister that will avail them, if God do not succeed them: Many think by their Skill, by their Parts, by their Policy, and by their Learning, to do mighty things; when, alas! they see themselves suddenly blasted in a secret way, by the Hand of God, and all their Devices brought to naught; Men of small Parts and Learning, God being with them, many times wonderfully prosper; when Men of great Parts, Learning, and Wisdom, are confounded, because they acknowledge not the Lord, nor seek to him; *By strength no man shall prevail*: O! therefore, ye the Sons of the Mighty, acknowledge God, and lean not to your own Understanding.

GOD *can help in Straits.*

Eighthly, Men should acknowledge the Lord in all things they go about; because they may be brought into such straits, and have such difficult Cases before them, that they may see the work is too hard for them, or they may not know what to do; their VViſdom may fail them, or Men may be brought into such straits, as sometimes the *Sea Men* are, that they are at their *Wits end*; but God then can help the States-men how to project Matters, and order their difficult Cases; and the Seaman, when he crys to God, wants not help, *God makes the storm a calm, and causes the proud waves to cease, and brings them out of all their troubles*; read *Psal.* 107. at your leisure: Men may want VViſdom, though they have great Power; or want Power, though they have great VViſdom, or may want time, and a fit opportunity, tho' they have both VViſdom and Power; but God wants neither Power, VViſdom, nor Opportunity: Therefore we should acknowledge him.

GOD's *Promise is to them that seek to him.*

Ninthly, VVe ought to acknowledge the Lord in all our ways, because whatsoever he hath promised to do for his People, he positively says, he will nevertheless be sought unto, that he may do it for them: *I the Lord build the ruined places, and plant that that was desolate; I the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it.* Ezek. 36. 37. Thus saith the Lord God, *I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them*, &c. God will justifie us freely of his own Grace, through the imputation of Christ's Righteousness; but he will have us look to him, or believe in Christ;

Christ, that he may do it for us: Moreover, he will give us the Grace of Faith, that we may believe in Jesus Christ; but he will have us enquire of him; we must pray to him, and attend on his Word, that he may give that Grace and Power to us, to believe, *&c.* Also God will pardon our Sins, *for his own Name-sake, and not remember them any more*; but he will bring us to his Feet, or humbly, with Contrition of Spirit, to cry to him, that we may receive that Pardon: For, as a King may freely forgive a guilty *Rebel*, yet he must come and confess his horrid Treason, and beg Pardon on his Knees; so God will cause the guilty Sinner thus to do also: In like manner God will perform all his Promises, and give Counsel, Direction, and Wisdom to *Senators*, and to Ministers of Justice, to godly Magistrates and Preachers of his Word, *&c.* but he will be enquired of, and sought unto by them, that he may do it for them: And this he hath declared, and positively made known to be his Will, and Absolute Pleasure; therefore it would be high Presumption, and Pride, to expect these things of him, unless we comply with him in this Matter.

Tenthly, All Men ought to acknowledge God in all their ways; because, not to look to God, seek to God, and acknowledge him, is *Brutish*; 'tis to be worse than Heathens and Idolators; for, they in Straits and Afflictions, or when they enter upon Matters of Moment, will cry to their Gods; *They called on the name of Baal from Morning even until Noon, saying, O Baal hear us; but there was no voice*: And *Elijah mocked them*, and said, *Cry aloud for he is a God, either he is a pursuing, or in a journey; or, peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked*: Moreover, the *Mariners* that were with *Jonah* in the Ship, (who were *Heathens*) in that Storm they were in, *Every Man cryed unto his God*, and seemed to be offended with *Jonah*, that he did not cry to his God also: *What meanest thou, O sleeper, arise, and call upon thy God.* The *Israelites* usually asked Counsel of God, by the *Ephod*, the *Grecians*, by their *Oracles*; but Christians ought only to go to God by Jesus Christ, and ask Counsel in his Name. Brethren, that God that brings a People, a Nation, or particular Person into Trouble, (and sometimes for great Sins) only knows how to bring them out of it: Such that eye not God in their Trouble, never search into the cause of it; and as they know not, consider not the cause of their Disease, so they are as ignorant of the Cure; and from hence apply indirect Medicines, not to acknowledge God, is to question the Being of God: However, it argues, they do not depend upon

1 *King* 18. 26.

verse 27.

Jonah 1. 5.

him, that in their Trouble do not seek unto him: Shall Heathens give greater Glory to *Dumb Idols*, than Christians give to the true and only God of Heaven and Earth.

They that depend upon their own Wisdom, do in effect, Deifie themselves; for none hath a self-sufficiency in him, or is independant, but God alone: But, how like are some Men to the *Swine*, that greedily eat up the Acorns that lie under the Trees, but never look up to the Tree from whence they come; or like a *Dog*, that seems angry, and snarles at the Stone that is thrown at him, but never regards the Hand of him that threw it, nor knows he the cause thereof.

Eleventhly, It followeth from hence therefore, that we ought in all our ways to acknowledge the Lord; because 'tis hereby God is glorified: As not to acknowledge him, seek to him, and trust in him, doth detract from God, or lessen his glory; nay, utterly rob him of that honour and glory that is due to him alone; so hereby we give him that glory which is owing to him from his Creatures: We by fearing him, shew that he is God, that he is our Maker, our Lord and only Soveraign; and by trusting in him alone, we acknowledge that he is our help, our strength, our hope, and that our dependance is upon him. He is great, and therefore to be feared; he is faithful, therefore to be believed; he is good, therefore to be beloved, and made the only Object of our chiefest Affection; he is our only Counsellor, and therefore we should look to him for direction, wisdom and counsel.

Twelfthly, We should seek to God, and acknowledge him, for all, and in all things, especially in a time of trouble; because what deliverances, help or succour soever we receive, it is wholly to be ascribed to him; but they that seek not to God for direction and success, will not look upon themselves obliged to praise God for all the mercy, help or deliverance received; they will sacrifice to their own Nets or Drags, to their wisdom, policy, strength or care; or to their own counsels, and so admire themselves.

But the truth is, if men acknowledge not God, or neglect to seek to him for the Mercy they want, the Mercy when received may prove a Curse to them instead of a Blessing: *God* gave *Israel* Food, but *sent Leanness to their Souls.* To these I might add, That Gods Counsel shall stand, he will do all his pleasure; there is no counsel against him shall prosper; he is the great Disposer of all Affairs of Nations, &c. and if we comply not

with

with his VVord, in acknowledging him, he may blaſt all our hopes; there is no contending with the Almighty; they that ſubſcribe not to his wiſe Government, and exalt not him, he will at laſt cut them in pieces. In a word, 'Tis for our good; 'tis our Intereſt to acknowledge *God*, as well as it tends to his Glory. *Luke* 19. 27.

Laſtly, VVe ſhould *acknowledge God in all our Ways*, becauſe God can do VVonders in the way of his working for his People, when they ſeek to him: VVhat VVonders did he do of old? *His Hand is not ſhortned that he cannot Save*: VVhen things are paſt help or remedy with Men, 'tis a fit opportunity for God to work: *In the Mount it ſhall be ſeen.* *Iſa.* 59. 1.

He can reſtrain the Paſſions of Men, the Waves of the Sea, and the Tumults of the People; he changed *Eſau*'s Heart to *Jacob*; he cauſed the *Egyptians* to lend their Jewels to the *Iſraelites*; he can cut off the Spirits of Princes, or ſtrike them with a Panuick Fear, and cauſe them to fly when none purſues them: He raiſed up new Troubles upon *Saul*, and made him ceaſe perſuing of *David*, when he was in danger.

God can ſoon infatuate the Counſels of our Enemies, Iſa. 44. 25. *He fruſtrateth the Tokens of the Lyars, and maketh Diviners mad, and turneth Wiſemen backward, and maketh their Knowledge Fooliſhneſs.* He can make our Enemies to act for our good; he cauſed *Cyrus* to proclaim Liberty to build *Jeruſalem*, and God's own Temple. *Iſa.* 44. 25.

And how did he turn the Counſel of *Achitophel* into Fooliſhneſs, at the Prayer of *David*. 2 *Sam.* 17. 23.

Theſe things being conſidered, you may find there are Reaſons ſufficient to ſhew, That it is our Duty, in all our Ways, to acknowledge God; but no more as to the Doctrinal Part. I ſhall now briefly endeavour to improve (by way of Application) what hath been ſaid.

The Application.

FROM hence it appears, That it is a great and an abominable sin, not to acknowledge God in every thing we go about.

Infer. 1. 1. Not to consult with God, is in effect to deny his Special Providence over us; or that he orders all events that come to pass. The truth is, we here in *England*, of late, talk so much of *Fortune* and of the *Fortunate*; that it seems as if we were in some Heathen Nation. I am sure no man can, or dares consult with God, or acknowledge him in any unlawful things, to gratifie their *Covetous Appetites*; if they do, let them tremble. Would they have God to Patronize their wickedness? Brethren, we should never step one step, in doing any thing which we have cause to doubt is sinful; or that which we cannot lately seek to God for a blessing upon.

2. Not to acknowledge God, is a kind of *Atheism*; sure such do not stedfastly believe the being of God: For if there be a God that governs all Affairs, why do they not seek to him, pray to him, trust in him as God.

3. Or at least, not to acknowledge God in every undertaking, it argues unbelief; and it doth cast contempt upon his Wisdom, Mercy, Goodness, &c. Slighting his Soveraignty, Care and Providence over them.

Such shew their Pride and Folly with a Witness, as if they were wise enough to manage their Affairs themselves, without consulting with God, and seeking to him a right way.

4. God may for this great neglect, and evil, refuse to appear to help men in their necessities and great straits; when matters are too difficult for them, God may let them fail in their Counsels, and be confounded in their Projects, to convince them they are but *Men*; and that without him they can do nothing. I am perswaded that God oftentimes (upon this account) infatuates the Counsels of Men; *Ye shall conceive Chaff, and shall bring forth Stubble.* Though men may like *Achitophel* give suitable counsel as cunning Statesmen, yet God can obstruct or hinder such concerned to take it, or from closing with it; but rather to take other counsel to their ruine, as *Ab-*

Isa. 33. 11.

salom took the Counsel of *Hushai*, to his utter overthrow; and this was all from God, *the Lord had appointed to defeat the good Counsel of Achitophel, to the intent that the Lord might bring evil upon Absalom.* 2 Sam. 17. 7. 10 14.

5. It shews, that such think it is in vain to seek God, possibly they judge the Almighty doth not concern himself about their matters; they are too low, too mean matters for the great God to take notice of; or else they conclude, he is unmindful of his own word and promises to them that seek him; or otherwise, they shew they have no faith in his word, nor dependance upon God. But did they give credit to the Holy Scripture, all their folly herein would soon vanish; for is it not said that an *Hair of our Head*, nor a *Sparrow* falls to the ground without God; he hath interressed himself in all our concerns, and if we seek him, he will be found; *He never said to the seed of* Jacob, *seek ye my face in vain.*

6. It shews, that such men do not take notice of the operations of Gods hand, nor observe what he hath done in times past; nay perhaps before their own Eyes, but a little before; Shall a *Heathen*, or men strangers to God, outdo such that are called Christians. *Potiphar* saw and was convinced, nay and did acknowledge that the Lord was with *Joseph*, and prospered all things his hand. Gen. 39. 3.

7. It robs God of that Sacred Homage and Worship which is due to him from all his Creatures, and so overthrows the foundation of all Religion. For by acknowleding God in all we do, we shew we own that Divine Worship, Fear and Trust that is due to him; but they who do it not, seem to disclaim or disown Gods chiefest Glory, *viz.* That Divine adoration that belongs to him alone, and which appears not only to be his right from Revelation, but from Natural Light; for 'tis a Branch of Natural Religion, to acknowledge and trust in God, and to seek to him for all things we want, and to praise him for all things we have or do receive.

He that is the only object of our Divine Worship, is he that governs all things, and from whom all good comes, and delivers us from whatsoever is evil or hurtful to us. But they that do not acknowledge God, will neither pray to him for what they need, nor praise him for what they receive; therefore it destroys all true trust in God, fear of God, and love to God, not to acknowledge him: and it shews such do in effect, deny *God's* governing the World, who Acknowledge him

not, or Pray not to him. *The Lord looked down from Heaven to*
Pſal. 14.2. *ſee if there were any did underſtand or ſeek God.*

He takes notice who they be that Acknowledge his Authority over them; or who underſtands this, and ſo Fear him and Calls upon him, and Truſt in him: But alas! the Wicked ſay, *Are not our tongues our own, and who is Lord over us:* They think their wiſdom is from themſelves, to Contrive, to Project; and their Tongues their own, to ſpeak and utter what their hearts conceive; and their Hands their own, to effect what their hearts contrive, and their tongues expreſs.

Queſt. *Who are they that do not truly Acknowledge God.*

Anſw. 1. Such that never or but ſeldom think of *God*. *David*, ſpeaking of the Wicked, ſaith, *God is not in all their Thoughts:* or in none of their Thoughts, they think not of *God*.

2. Such who never conſult with *God* in his word, about what they Undertake, that do not enquire, whether what they are about to do, be Juſt and Agreeable with the word and will of *God*; nor ſeek for a Bleſſing upon what they are about to do.

3. Such who Pray not to *God*, or leaſt wiſe, do not Pray in Faith or Believingly.

4. Such that depend upon their own wiſdom, or truſt in their own Strength, or rely upon an arm of fleſh: *Some truſt in*
Pſal. 44.6. *Horſes and ſome in Chariots.* But what ſaid *David*, *I will not truſt in my own Bow, neither ſhall my Sword ſave me: Aſſur ſhall not*
Hoſ. 14 3. *ſave us, we will not ride upon Horſes.*

5. Such who in all they do, do not chiefly ſeek the Honour of *God*, the Intereſt of *God*, and the Welfair of his People; but in their Prayers, rather eye their own intereſt, their own peace, ſafety and profit, or their own glory: Theſe do not truly Acknowledge *God*.

6. Such who do not Acknowledge, that all the good things they receive, to come from *God*; but aſcribe it to their care, wiſdom and induſtry, or ſecondary cauſes: as I heard of a wicked Man, who had a plentiful crop of Corn; and a neighbour obſerving it, bid him Praiſe *God* for it; Praiſe *God*, ſaid he, praiſe my dung-cart (or to that purpoſe) Such men be ſure Acknowledge not *God*.

7. Remember, That ſuch who do not live by Faith on *God*'s Promiſes and Providences through *Jeſus Chriſt*, or do not come to *God* in Chriſt, for all Spiritual and Temporal Bleſſings, or that Truſt not in him at all times and for all things, but either murmur againſt *God*, or deſpair of his Mercy in the Lord *Jeſus*; or

whosoever do not give *God* the glory of his Wisdom, Mercy, Justice, Power, Love and Faithfulness, as they shine forth in Christ; do not truly Acknowledge *God*.

Exhortation.

LEt me Exhort you all (these things being so) to Acknowledge *God*, whosoever you be, whether High or Low, Rich or Poor, Young or Old; the King on the Throne must Acknowledge *God*, as well as him that grinds at the Mill: 'tis both the duty of the Prince and of the Peasant: there are none so high, but he can bring down, nor none so low but he can raise up

2. Pray to him in Faith, for Prayer is one way to Acknowledge him. And as for Motives.

1. Consider, That Prayer is the Duty of all Men: though *God* will not hear Sinners; yet *Peter* put *Simon Magus* upon Prayer, *Pray, that the thoughts of thine heart may be forgiven thee*: This shews the need of Grace, of Faith, and a Changed Heart; if wicked men Pray not, they Sin; yet their Prayers cannot please *God*. *Acts* 8. 22.

2. You know that *God* will hear a godly mans prayer, if he prays in Faith, and for such things that are agreeable to his will, but let him come in Christs Name: *Ask and ye shall Receive, that your Joy may be full*. 1 *Joh.* 5. 14. 15. *Joh.* 16. 24.

3. Prayer hath obtained great Blessings of *God*; nay, it hath done Wonderful Things: I mean the Prayer of Faith and of Faithful Persons. It hath *opend* and *shut Heaven*: *Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly, that it might not rain, and it rained not on the Earth, by the space of Three Years and Six Months; and he prayed again, and the Heavens gave Rain, and the Earth brought forth.* Prayer hath quenched the violence of Fire, and stopt the mouths of Lyons: Faith and Prayer divided the Red Sea, that *Israel* went through it on dry ground It hath put to flight the Armies of *Aliens*. *Jam.* 5. 17, 18. *Exod.* 14. *Heb.* 11. 34.

4. Prayer is Gods Ordinance, 'tis his way wherein we ought to meet him.

5. It hath his Promises, his word that is setled in Heaven; his promise is as firm as Heaven it self.

6. Prayer Honours *God* many ways.

1. *Hereby we Acknowledge his Omniscience*, that he knows us, and our wants and necessities. 2. Prayer

2. Prayer Honours *God*, in that by Prayer we acknowledge his *Omnipotence*, that he is able to help us, let our condition be what it will: and in that he can confound our Enemies.

3. *In respect of our dependance upon God*, for in Prayer we Acknowledge, we do not know what to do, but our eyes are up to him and our Trust is in him.

4. In Prayer we Acknowledge his Authority over us, and his Love and Faithfulness towards us: But Brethren, know that it is the Prayer of the New Creature that prevaileth, that pleaseth and honoureth him; 'tis the voice of the New Born Spiritual Babe, that is sweet to him; yea 'ts the voice of his own Spirit that he hears, and which brings honour to him: Moreover know, that 'tis through Christs Intercession only, that our Prayers are heard: Christ offers up all the Prayers of his own People with his own Incense, and when he offerred up their Prayers with his Incense, their were Voices, Lightnings and Thunder. *Rev.* 8. 3.

1. Joyn Confession of Sins with your Supplications: O find out, every one of you, the Plague of his own heart, and lie low at the Foot of *God*; confess your own Sins, and the Sins of the Nation, and the Sins of *God*'s People, thus you have heard *Daniel* did: Brethren, to Confession of Sin, add also deep Humiliation, this must be joyned with our Prayers and Confessions; nay, and Reformation of Life also, every one must turn from his evil way. See 2 *Chron.* 7. 14. *If my People that are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their Evil Ways; then will I hear from Heaven, and will forgive their Sins, and will heal their Land:* If we regard Iniquity in our hearts, *God* will not hear our Prayers: 'Tis true, a National Humiliation and Reformation, may prevent National Judgments, as in the case of *Nineveh:* O that we could see but such an Humiliation (as was among them) among us in *England*, for the Sins of this Nation are grievous in the Sight of *God*, being attended with such Lamentable Aggravations, we are a People of exceeding great Mercies; but O! the Wickedness of these Days: God is therefore angry with us; the Inhabitants of *England* may see their Sins in their Punishment: Doth not *God* touch us in our Trade and Coyn? Is it not, because those two things have been, as it were, the Idols of *England*, or of Multitudes among us? Sirs, Let us look higher than to secondary Causes of these present distresses that are upon us; and acknowledge God to be just in permitting these Evils to come upon the Land: If *Dan.* 9. 1, 2, 3, 4.

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we cannot find out the Cause of our Distempers, how shall we find out a Cure?

I am afraid least this Pretended Fast, should be but as a Mock-Fast, or a day of Humiliation *in shew only, and not in heart*; if we see all persons reforming their ways, we shall have ground to hope better things.

If Magistrates do their part, not only in making good Laws against Vice and Prophaneness; but in seeing those Laws put into due execution; and they themselves, and every man to turn from his evil ways, and from the violence that is in his hand; then may Gods Wrath and Anger cease; but if not, his judgment will break forth upon us.

Brethren, God is a jealous God, and will not be mocked; what men sow they shall reap. 'Tis said of *Nineveh*, *And God saw their Works, that they turned from their evil way, and God repented of the evil, that he had said, that he would do unto them, and did it not.* It was not their words, but their works that God looked at; 'tis not what we speak, but what we do that will prevail with the Allmighty. Jonah 2. 10.

1. Terror and wo to them that cast off all fear of God, and acknowledge him not, or do it not in truth and sincerity. *Thou castest off fear, and restrainest prayer before God.* Some men look upon it vain and unprofitable to pray to God, or to acknowledge him; *What profit is it that we have kept his Ordinances, and have walked mournfully before the Lord of Hosts?* But what will these men do in the day of Wrath? Judgments shall bow them and break them, if Mercies will not melt them. Job. 15. 4. Mal. 3. 14.

2. Those that refuse to acknowledge God, or who follow not his Direction, and walk not in his Ways, nor hearken not to his Voice, nor wait for his Counsel, he will in Wrath and Judgment leave, and give them up to their own hearts lusts, and to walk in their own counsel, as he did *Israel* of old; *My people would not hearken to my voice, and Israel would have none of me; so I gave them up to their own hearts lusts, and they walked in their own counsel.* God may justly withdraw all his directing influences from such, and blind their Eyes, who, through Pride, think they have Wisdom enough to manage their own Affairs, and direct their own Paths. God's counsel is to men, to forsake their sinful ways, to embrace his Son, or believe in Christ, and trust in him alone, and rest on his word, and cry to him in their trouble; but when they refuse to do this, he oftentimes utterly leaves them, and then they fall, and bring ruin on them-

themſelves and others, whoſe counſellers they pretend to be, or choſen to be. The truth is, while the Nation continueth in its Rebellion againſt God, and all Prophaneneſs aboundeth to ſuch a degree, as to this day it doth; what can we expect but Wrath and fearful Judgments? What ſignifies a few formal Prayers, whilſt men hold faſt their ſins? Are ſuch Laws made and executed, to check and reſtrain the curſed enormities of the ungodly? That may tend as an effectual way to accompliſh ſuch a Reformation that God calls for. Alas, whilſt every Mans Hand at Sea and Land is up againſt God, fighting againſt him; can we expect he ſhould appear to fight for us? O what horrid Pride, Uncleanneſs, Oaths and Blaſphemy, and all Prophaneneſs do we ſee and hear of every day? 'Tis a wonder the Earth opens not its Mouth to ſwallow them up at Land (as it did them at *Jemeca*;) and that the Sea doth not ſwallow up our Ships (and thoſe in them) they having ſuch a wait and load in them. Sin is a heavy burthen, and our ſins are ſo heavy, they are enough to ſink (as one obſerves) *ſeventeen Kingdoms*. Moreover, what *Errors* and deteſtable *Hereſies* do abound among us? And alſo what Diviſions, Diſcord and Animoſities are there among Profeſſors? One ſet againſt another, little Love and Charity being now to be found in the Earth: Much Preaching, but little Practiſe: Are not many Profeſſors as Proud, Covetous, Carnal and Looſe as others. O where is the Life and Power of Religion? What can we look for whilſt things are thus, but ſome fearful calamity and diſſolution.

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6. You that are Godly, have interest in this mighty God; He is your Father, therefore he will Teach and Direct you; His Faithfulness and Fatherly Affections leadeth him thus to do.

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4. As he can Direct us, and none can withſtand him; or give us Counſel, which none can overthrow; ſo he can with eaſe, defeat all the Counſels of his Peoples Enemies; nay, can turn their crafty counſel to the Advantage of his own People: *He taketh the Wiſe in their own Craftineſs, and the Counſel of the Froward is carryed headlong:* or as the Prophet *Iſaiah* ſaith, *The Counſel of the Wiſe ſhall be turned backward. Omne Conſilium Captatum in Feſtinatione eſt Stultitia.* God can mingle a perverſe Spirit, and and make the Princes of *Zoan* to become Fools. Job 5.13. Iſa. 44.25.

5. When he is ſought truly unto, he hath promiſed to direct a People or Perſon that ſeareth him; his ſpecial care is over ſuch that Truſt in him: *Behold the eye of the Lord is over them that Fear him, upon them that hope in his Mercy:* Mind my Text, *He ſhall direct thy Paths; the ſteps of a good Man are ordered by the Lord, and he delighteth in his ways. Though the Young Lyons want and ſuffer hunger, yet they that fear God ſhall want no good thing: He will lead the Blind, in ways they knew not,* &c. Though we are in our ſelves, Blind and Ignorant, yet if we Acknowledge Him, He will lead us, and will not leave us to the luſts of our Enemies: Brethren, we are ſtill in God's hand and none can pluck us out; nay, and our times alſo are in his hand. Pſal. 37. 23.

6. You that are Godly, have intereſt in this mighty God; He is your Father, therefore he will Teach and Direct you; His Faithfulneſs and Fatherly Affections leadeth him thus to do.

7. Do you alſo commit your ſelves to him and Truſt in him; and will he, think you, ever fail ſuch that ſo do: *The Poor committeth himſelf to thee: Thou art the Helper of the Fatherleſs:* If unfaithful Man will not fail ſuch that wholly Truſt in him; will the Faithful God not help and direct ſuch that put all their Truſt in him; though our Sins be many, and our miſeries and dangers many alſo, yet Brethren, let us lye low before the Lord, and humbly confeſs with the Prophet our own Inſufficiency. O Pſal. 10. 14.

Lord, I know that the way of Man is not in himself, it is not in man
Jer. 10. 13 *that walketh to direct his Steps.* Let us use all due means which God directeth us to, or be found in our duty, and leave the Issue of all to God; Men not seeking constantly to God, nor relying on him, may be the cause they prosper not. But,

Let it go how it will with the Land, or with the Wicked
Isa. 3. 10 therein; yet saith the Prophet, *Say to the Righteous, it shall go well with him.* A dismal day must come and will come upon this Land, and upon all Nations of the Earth; we see already *Distress of Nations and Perplexities*; but these things are but the beginning of Sorrows, but do you that Fear God, *Look up, lift up your heads, for your Redemption draws near.*

8. God will Bless, and give Success to such that seek to him, that humbly and sincerely Acknowledge him, yea in their Civil Affairs; such shall find their Endeavours crowned with a Blessing; and also in Spiritual matters God will lead them: *The*
Psal. 25. 9. *meek will he guide in Judgment, and the meek will he teach his ways:* that is, the humble and lowly ones, that Acknowledge God, and submit to his hand, and are willing and desirous to be led, directed and governed by him in all their ways, in doing Justice and Judgment, who are not selfish or self-seeking persons, who lay not burthens on others to ease themselves; but act in all righteousness and equallity in what they do, in the Station where they are set; for as all the ways of God are Mercy and Truth, so should all the ways of Men be, especially such that are Rulers and Magistrates, who are intrusted with the great concerns of a Nation or People; they ought to be Men fearing God, Men of Truth, hating Evil; if not, God may justly leave them, and blast all their endeavours; for they are the Meek, the Humble and Righteous ones, that God will guide in Judgment, and direct their Paths.

Job 36. 22. 9. Know assuredly, *That none Teaches like God:* What is Man's teaching? some Glory in their Phylosophical Learning, but that only fills the head with knowledge; it may make Men criticks, but not Christians: others boast of the Teachings of Natural Reason, and will receive no Principles of Religion that is above this Teacher; and thereby, they cast contempt upon the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

All True Knowledge flows from God's Soveraign Grace; he guides and teaches whomsoever he pleaseth; he can speak to the Heart, nay, give a heart to understand, as well as instruction; he can give a teachable frame, or a teachable Spirit, as well as

direct those whom he hath given such a frame, or heart, unto; therefore it followeth, That to teach and direct our Souls, is the effect of Almighty Power. *Be still and know that I am God.* Confess your weakness, your Ignorance, and acknowledge my Skill, my Power; as if God should say, *No man can come to me,* John 6. 45. *except the Father, which sent me, draw him*: What is his Drawing, but his Teaching; *Every one therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me.*

Men must be Un-taught, or become Fools, before they can be Wise; I mean, emptied of their own Wisdom, and confess, they know nothing as they ought to know: Christ's Office and Work, is to Teach his People: *He only hath the Tongue of the Learned*; therefore let all men Learn of him, Wait upon him; Acknowledge him; to be their only Instructor and Counsellor; and say with *David*, *Thou shalt guide me with thy Counsel, and afterward receive me to Glory.* And thus I shall End as I Begun, *In all thy ways Acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy Paths.* Psal. 33. 24.

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